

Amendments To The Claims:

1-50. (Canceled)

51. (Currently Amended) An unexpanded stent constructed from a tube, the stent comprising:

a first expansion column having a plurality of first expansion strut pairs, each first expansion strut pair including two interconnected first expansion struts, each first expansion strut pair open at a proximal end of the first expansion column and closed at a distal end of the first expansion column, first expansion strut pairs which are adjacent one another connected to one another at a proximal end of the first expansion column, the first expansion column defining a continuous closed path about the circumference of the stent;

a second expansion column having a plurality of second expansion strut pairs, each second expansion strut pair including two interconnected second expansion struts, each second expansion strut pair open at a distal end of the second expansion column and closed at a proximal end of the second expansion column, second expansion strut pairs which are adjacent one another connected to one another at a distal end of the second expansion column, the second expansion column distal to the first expansion column, the second expansion column defining a continuous closed path about the circumference of the stent;

a first connector column having a plurality of first connectors, each first connector extending from a distal end region of one first expansion strut pair to a proximal end region of one second expansion strut pair and directly connecting the one first expansion strut pair to the one second expansion strut pair, the one second expansion strut pair having a second expansion strut with a longitudinal axis which is collinear with a longitudinal axis of one of the first expansion struts of the one first expansion strut pair to which it is connected, a first end of the first connector connecting to the first expansion strut pair at a location which is longitudinally and circumferentially offset from a location at which the second end of the first connector connects to the second expansion strut pair.

52. (Previously Presented) The unexpanded stent of claim 51 wherein each first connector extends from a distal end of a first expansion strut to a proximal end of a second

expansion strut.

53. (Previously Presented) The unexpanded stent of claim 51 wherein each connector includes a first linear section, a second linear section and a third linear section.

54. (Previously Presented) The unexpanded stent of claim 51 wherein a proximal end of each first connector extends from the first expansion column at an oblique angle relative to the longitudinal axis of the stent.

55. (Previously Presented) The unexpanded stent of claim 54 wherein a distal end of each first connector extends from the second expansion column at an oblique angle relative to the longitudinal axis of the stent.

56. (Previously Presented) The unexpanded stent of claim 51 wherein each first connector includes at least one curved portion.

57. (Currently Amended) The unexpanded stent of claim 51 further comprising:
a third expansion column having a plurality of third expansion strut pairs, each third expansion strut pair including two interconnected third expansion struts, each third expansion strut pair open at a distal end of the third expansion column and closed at a proximal end of the third expansion column, third expansion strut pairs which are adjacent one another connected to one another at a distal end of the third expansion column, the third expansion column defining a continuous closed path about the circumference of the stent;

a second connector column having a plurality of second connectors, wherein each second connector extends from a proximal end region of one third expansion strut pair to a distal end region of one second expansion strut pair and directly connects the one third expansion strut pair to the one second expansion strut pair, the one second expansion strut pair having a second expansion strut with a longitudinal axis which is collinear with a longitudinal axis of one of the third expansion strut of the one third expansion strut pair to which it is connected, a second end of the second connector connecting to the third expansion strut pair at a location which is longitudinally and circumferentially offset from a location at which the first end of the second connector connects to the second expansion strut pair.

58. (Previously Presented) The stent of claim 57 wherein the first, second and third expansion struts are all parallel to the longitudinal axis of the stent and the second expansion column includes second expansion struts which do not have any first connectors extending

directly therefrom and which do not have any second connectors extending directly therefrom.

59. (Previously Presented) The stent of claim 57 wherein the first, second and third expansion struts are all parallel to the longitudinal axis of the stent and the second expansion column includes second expansion struts which have a connector extending from a distal end thereof and a connector extending from a proximal end thereof.

60-62. (Cancelled)